



Underserved Populations Working Group

Meeting Minutes

September 22, 2011, 3:30pm – 4:30pm

IDHS Offices- 401 S. Clinton 2nd Floor, Chicago IL 60607

1. Attendance:

- a. In Person:** Joe Antolin (Heartland Alliance), Carissa Gomez (Feeding Illinois), Grace Hou (Department of Human Services), Peter Vina (Department of Human Services)
- b. Phone:** Esperanza Gonzalez (Illinois Migrant Council), Marla Goodwin (Jeremiah's Food Pantry), Allison Forrer (Feeding Illinois), Kerry Lofton (Illinois Department of Agriculture), Christine Hammond (IDHS), Tracy Smith (Feeding Illinois), Sima Quraishi (Muslim Women Resource Center)

2. Understanding barriers for the immigrant population

- Information from Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights from Sima (Muslim Women Resource Center):
 - Immigrants are moving from the city to suburban communities
 - Issues:
 - Some pantries are asking for IDs which is an issue for those who want to access services.
 - Will follow up to get more information on statistics. Joe offered to get more statistics through the IMPACT center.
 - Work with groups like ICIRR and their members that are the first line of service for immigrants
 - Need for bilingual caseworkers
 - The five year requirement can be a barrier
 - Need better information about why ID's are used
 - Language and cultural issues at DHS offices.

3. Follow up on migrant worker issues and recommendations

- Esperanza presented recommendations
- Carissa will distribute these points
- Began discussion with IL Extension to begin survey

4. Recommendation focus areas (combined from ineligible and eligible sub-groups)

- Coordination of services
- Education and outreach: need to cross train agency reps, public education about access points and the need in their communities
- Improved access to services
 - Transportation in rural areas; office hours for working families; cultural and language barriers
 - Potential waivers to do more with mobile food and summer programs
- Maximize private funding opportunities
- Joe Antolin brought up the point about whether there is a policy issue with groups that serve specific populations. Could we be doing specific distribution points that target certain populations? Need to bring funding streams together in order to make this possible. Commodities could not be population specific but there is some flexibility with other areas of funding.
- How do we better address mixed status families? SNAP only benefits those who are citizens.
- Could unemployment offices give information about food pantries
- Need for more nutrition education (Headstart), Affordable Healthcare Act tie in. Need better food supplied and better education.

5. Debrief of Listening Tour events and upcoming Listening Tour events

6. Upcoming full commission meeting

- Initial recommendations for underserved populations

7. Set tentative October meeting date: October 26, 3pm, IDHS Offices- 401 S. Clinton 7th Floor, Chicago IL 60607